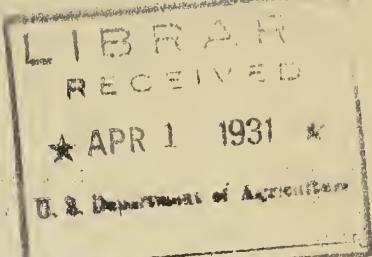


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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

A radio talk by Rowena Schmidt Carpenter, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered through WRC and 39 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, March 12, 1931.

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How do you do, Homemakers!

It is so nice to keep on hearing from one after another of you. Your letters and requests for our bulletins, you see, are the only ways I can know if I am talking about subjects that interest and help you.

Sometimes I decide, as I did today, that a good many of us face the same problem at the same time, and since I've been conscious of the condition of the floors at our house for several weeks, I thought maybe this was a good chance to catch you with a question too about waxing, oiling, or refinishing floors.

For hardwood floors there is nothing quite as good as waxing. Wax properly applied brings out the beauty of the grain, and preserves the natural color of the wood. And as for wear, even hard usage will make waxed floors improve with age; that is of course if they receive some attention and care. Perhaps that seems like a pretty big if to you, because it does take a good deal of hard work now and then to polish and care for floors with a wax finish. But let me remind you that the labor of keeping such floors in condition is much less if the seasonal cleaning and waxing are carefully and thoroughly done. Just how often you have to clean off the old wax and apply new, no one but yourself can decide. That depends upon the kind of floor you have, how smoothly it is laid, how much it is walked over, and perhaps how soiled and how rough the soles of your children's shoes are! But anyway, if there is so little wax left that the floor no longer takes a good polish, or if there are stains and spots that spoil the appearance, it's time to dissolve off the film of dirty wax on the surface, remove the stains, and apply new wax.

You will find that turpentine or gasoline will remove the wax easiest and at the same time will leave the floor bright. Both of these solvents are very inflammable, so be sure there is no flame lighted in the room where you are working, and as an extra precaution keep your turpentine or gasoline in a tightly corked container, pouring out just a little at a time on a cloth as you need it. Most of the stains will come up with the wax. Some may have to be washed or scrubbed off with water, and such stubborn and penetrating stains as ink and iron rust must be removed with oxalic acid solution. All traces of soap or other cleansers and of the acid solution must be removed, and the floor must be perfectly dry before the re-waxing is done.

In applying wax, don't be too generous. If you put a great deal of wax on the floor at once, you will find it very difficult to produce a high polish

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even by very hard rubbing, and aside from that, there will be extra wax in a sort of soft coat on the surface that will collect dust and become gummy. Surface wax shows mars and scratches badly, too.

The light application of wax is rubbed into the floor, and the hard finish takes on a beautiful gloss. A weighted brush or polisher with a long handle makes polishing easy. The weight need not be heavy; it is the friction that does the work. There are light polishers weighing only a few pounds that can be handled by any of us easily. An improvised polisher can be made from a smooth brick with woolen material sewed neatly around it. Attach a long handle if possible so you can work in an upright position. It is bad enough to have to work on hands and knees while applying the wax.

After doing a thorough job of this kind, keep your waxed floors in good condition by frequent care. Sweep them up with a soft brush or wool mop that is entirely free from oil. And perhaps once a week or as needed, wipe up the floor with a cloth moistened with a very little turpentine or gasoline, not enough to remove all the wax, only enough to remove the dirty layer on top. A clean cloth wrung out of warm, slightly soapy water may be used, but water dulls and whitens a waxed floor so that harder polishing is necessary to restore the luster.

So much for waxed floors. But perhaps your problem just now is refinishing a kitchen floor by oiling with linseed oil, or maybe you are about to varnish, stain, or paint some of your floors. If so you will find Farmers' Bulletin 1219, "Floors and Floor Coverings", full of helpful suggestions.

Next Thursday Miss Boss Viemont, whom you remember I am sure, will be with me to give you some helpful hints on the making of spring curtains. Goodbye, Homemakers, until next week.